



Credit Earning Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)

Question: What is the Credit Earning Program?

Answer: The governor recently signed a law, which created the Credit Earning Program. SB X3-18 authorizes CDCR to grant qualified inmates a reduction of their time of incarceration by actively participating in and completing components of in-prison rehabilitation programs. In addition, eligible inmates will also earn day-for-day credits while in county jails, at reception centers, and on waiting lists for assignments. This new law also allows institutional firefighters to earn 2-for-1 credits.

Question: How does the Credit Earning Program work?

Answer: An eligible inmate is assigned to, and participates in, a rehabilitative program like academic or vocational training, a substance abuse program, firefighter training, etc. As he or she progresses through the program, certain components or "milestones" of the program are completed. Varying amounts of "credits" will be awarded upon completion of the specific milestone. These credits can reduce the amount of time the inmate spends in prison. The incarceration time may be reduced up to six weeks in a 12-month calendar period.

Question: How do I know if I am eligible for milestone credits?

Answer: You are eligible to earn credits to reduce your time spent in prison if you:
Are eligible to earn day-for-day credits under PC 2933
Are currently incarcerated as a New Commitment (NC) or a Parole Violator with a New Term (PVWNT) [Parole Violators Return-to-Custody (PVRTC) are not eligible.]
Do not have a second or third strike as the current sentence [pursuant to PC 2933.5 (a)(1)]
Do not have a life sentence or life without possibility of parole
Are not currently sentenced under PC § 667(b)(i) or § 1170.12
Are not currently sentenced for a violent offense, as defined under PC § 667.5
Have no registration requirement under Penal Code Section 290

Ask your counselor whether you are eligible for this program.

Question: If I am in a program, how do I get milestone credits?

Answer: You must actively participate in your assigned rehabilitation program assignment. Every assignment will have the requirements to earn the milestone credits spelled out for you. If you are in academic education, you complete the assignments necessary to complete a milestone. If you are in a vocational program, you complete the necessary steps that will award you the milestone credit. If you are in a substance abuse or firefighter training program, you will complete the necessary requirements.

Question: When does this program begin?

Answer: January 25, 2010

Credit Earning FAQs Continued



Question: How will I know if I complete a milestone?

Answer: Your instructor will notify you. In addition, you will receive a copy of a CDC 128G, which will tell you the milestone you completed and the number of weeks credit you received.

Question: How will I know if my release date is reduced?

Answer: You will receive a copy of an updated Legal Status Summary from Case Records, showing you that your release date has been changed due to the award of a milestone credit.

Question: You say I can get my time reduced up to six weeks per year. What if I earn more credits than that?

Answer: The law states that only 6 weeks of credits may be applied in a 12-month calendar period. Any credits you earn beyond the six weeks will go into a credit "bank account." When the next 12-month calendar period starts, your "banked" credits will be used to further reduce your sentence.

Question: How does this 12-month calendar period work?

Answer: The 12-month calendar period starts on the date you complete your first milestone. As an example: Let's say you started an assignment on January 4, 2010. You completed your first milestone on February 24, 2010. That date would start your 12-month calendar period. Let's say you worked really hard and earned 10 weeks of credits from February 24, 2010 to February 23, 2011. Six weeks of those credits will be applied to reduce your prison time during that 12-month calendar period, and the "extra" four weeks would be carried over and applied on February 24, 2012.

Question: What if I parole and still have banked credits. Can they be used to reduce my parole supervision time?

Answer: No. Any credits not used by the time you parole will simply be cleared from your "bank account."

Question: Can I save the credits for the next time I am incarcerated?

Answer: No. When you parole, the credit "bank account" is cleared and closed.

Question: What if I am transferred partway through my program. Will I receive credit for the part of the milestone I was working on?

Answer: No. Credits will be awarded only for milestones completed. If the facility to which you are transferred has the same program, you should request to be placed on that waiting list. Once you are assigned to that program, you should be able to continue the program where you left off when you were transferred.

Question: If I am already assigned to a program, and I have completed two years of training, can I get milestone credits for the parts I completed before January 25, 2010.

Answer: No. There is no provision to award milestone credits for components completed prior to January 25, 2010.

Question: I know guys who are in assignments who aren't doing any work. They are taking up spots I want to get. How can I get in?

Answer: Anyone who, according to the instructor, is not actively participating in his or her assignment will be removed and will be replaced by an eligible individual on the waiting list.